

2006.193EK

October 26, 2010



Ms. Jocelyn Boyd Interim Chief Clerk & Administrator Public Service Commission of S. C. 101 Executive Center Drive Columbia, SC 29210

Re: Request of the Public Service Commission for Information on Termination of Electric and/or Gas Service

Dear Ms Boyd:

Pursuant to the letter received from Mr. David Butler, Esq., dated January 13, 2005, enclosed is South Carolina Electric & Gas Company's (SCE&G) information regarding involuntary termination of both electric and gas customers' services. This report covers involuntary terminations in the third quarter of 2010.

A copy of this report is being provided to the Office of Regulatory Staff.

Sincerely,

John R. Hendrix

#### Enclosures

C: F. David Butler, Esq.
Dan F. Arnett
Catherine D. Taylor, Esq.
John W. Flitter
Kenneth R. Jackson
K. Chad Burgess

# Disconnect Statistics 3rd Quarter 2010

	DNPs Generated	Discor Resolved	Disconnects olved DNP's Completed	% Complete vs Generated	
July Residential	23,010	17,896	5,114	22%	Resi
Non-Residential	1,759	1,389	370	21%	Non-Re
Total	24,769	19,285	5,484	22%	% Rec
August Residential	26,406	18,554	7,852	30%	Resi
Non-Residential	1,753	1,358	395	23%	Non-R
Total	28,159	19,912	8,247	79%	% Rec
September Residential	28,590	18,121	10,469	37%	Sep Res
Non-Residential	2,061	1,589	472	23%	Non-R
Total	30,651	19,710	10,941	36%	% Rec
Grand Totals Residential	78,006	54,571	23,435	30%	Gran
Non-Residential	5,573	4,336	1,237	22%	Non-F
Total	83,579	58,907	24,672	30%	% Re
Avg monthly total	27,860	19,636	8,224		

Resolved indicates payment received or arrangements made (Short term arrangement, Deferred Payment Plan, Medical Certificates, etc.)

# Reconnects

Total	5,114	370	5,484	7,852	395	8,247	10,469	472	10,941	23,435	1,237	24,672
No Reconnect	1218	110	<b>1,328</b> 24%	1,832	126	<b>1,958</b> 24%	2217	135	<b>2352</b> 21%	5,267	371	5,638 23%
> Five Days F	262	27	<b>289</b> 5%	406	32	<b>438</b> 5%	356	25	<b>381</b> 3%	1,024	8	1,108 4%
Five Days	55	-	<b>56</b> 1%	89	4	73	82	4	<b>86</b> 1%	206	თ	215 1%
Four Days	53	ဖ	59 1%	95	4	97 1%	129	ω	137 1%	277	16	293 1%
Three Days	113	ω	<b>154</b>	169	ω	177 2%	197	4	<b>211</b> 2%	479	30	509 2%
Two Two Days	188	16	<b>204</b> 4%	330	16	346 4%	315	20	335 3%	833	52	885
One Day	622	37	<b>659</b> 12%	666	46	<b>1,045</b> 13%	1483	73	1556 14%	3,104	156	3,260 13%
Same Day Reconnect	2603	165	<b>2,768</b> 50%	3,952	161	<b>4,113</b> 50%	5690	193	<b>5883</b> 54%	12,245	519	12,764 52%
o	July Residential	Non-Residential	Total % Reconnected	August Residential	Non-Residential	<b>Total</b> % Reconnected	September Residential	Non-Residential	Total % Reconnected	Grand Totals Residential	Non-Residential	% Reconnected

If payment is not received within 10 days of the disconnect date, the account is final billed. Those accounts falling in that category are indicated by "no reconnect".





# System-wide Disconnect Statistics 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2010

## Reasons for involuntary termination:

Safety – hazardous meter situations Energy Diversion Disconnect Non-payment

#### Safety:

- During the 3rd quarter of 2010, 2 active meters were turned off for safety reasons.
- These meters were reconnected after repairs were made.

#### Energy Diversion:

There were no accounts disconnected due to Energy Diversion.

## Disconnect for non-payment:

- 24,672 disconnect orders were completed during the 3rd quarter of 2010. This represents an estimated 19,844 unique customers. 95% of these customers are residential customers and 5% are non-residential.
- 70% of the disconnect orders generated were canceled due to a payment or arrangement (Deferred Payment Agreement, Short Term Arrangement, etc.)
- The average daily number of disconnect orders completed was 411.
- Of the customers who were disconnected 65% reconnected within a 24 hour period.
- 10% of customers were disconnected 2 or more times during this period.

#### **SCE&G Residential Delinquency Process**

When a customer does not pay his/her utility bill, there are a number of steps that SCE&G takes to address the situation. The last step, and the least desirable, for dealing with a customer who has not paid his/her bill is to disconnect that customer's power.

Before any customer's power is disconnected, that customer is given multiple opportunities to pay a "past due" bill. The first past due notice is an attachment to the customer's monthly bill. It is displayed in the bill message portion and is marked "IMPORTANT NOTICE." This notifies the customer, at least ten (10) days prior to the possible termination of service, of SCE&G's intent to disconnect power. The notice displays a total of utility and non-utility related charges and complies with PSC Regulation 103-352A. The notice reads as follows:

#### BEFORE SERVICE IS DISCONNECTED

Your electric and/or natural gas service has been scheduled for disconnection because of non-payment. Under the rules and policies of South Carolina Electric and Gas Company, you have certain rights in this situation.

- 1. You have the right to an interview with the SCE&G local office customer representative at the address shown above who is authorized to accept payment or assist you in making deferred payment plan arrangements prior to disconnection. Contact our office between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday.
- 2. SCE&G intends to resolve any dispute or concern you may have. Call 1-800-251-7234 to have the staff of SCE&G investigate and review any dispute you may have concerning your service.
- 3. During the months of December through March, SCE&G will not disconnect a residential customer for a 30-day period, when furnished with a Medical Certificate signed by a licensed physician. If disconnection of your service would be dangerous to your health or a member of your household, obtain the Medical Certificate form from your SCE&G local office, have it completed and signed by your licensed physician and return the form to us prior to disconnection.
- 4. SCE&G's Customer Assistance Department works with elderly, handicapped and other special needs customers who require help from local agencies.
- 5. If a dispute cannot be resolved, the Office of Regulatory Staff is available at 1-800-922-1531 to investigate and review any unresolved dispute between SCE&G and the customer.

Four days prior to the forecasted disconnect, the customer is mailed a second notice, providing yet another opportunity to bring the account into good standing. This notice complies with PSC Regulation 103-352b, and includes options for customer to avoid disconnection or to communicate disputes.

In addition, third party notification is available to a customer that requests another individual to be notified before service is disconnected.

SCE&G does not disconnect services to its customers if the 24 hour-forecasted temperature is 32 degrees or below or 99 degrees or higher, or when adverse weather (ice storm, hurricane, major storms) impacts its service areas. In all cases, the company tries to use good judgment.

Service disconnects, especially those that coincide with inclement weather, are handled on a case-by-case basis, and include a consideration of immediate weather forecasts and a review of the customer's payment history.

As noted above, from December through March, SCE&G will not disconnect power for a 30-day period if a customer furnishes a physician-signed medical certificate stating that the customer or a member of the household has a health requirement that prohibits disconnection of service. These certificates are required by Federal law and upheld by the PSC.

In instances where a customer has demonstrated a good faith effort to pay the bill, but is struggling financially, SCE&G works directly with that customer to develop payment options that are tailored to the customer's individual situation. Those options include:

- . Short Term Arrangements Allows a currently forecasted disconnect date to be stopped and deferred to the next forecasted disconnect date. In addition, any notices that have not been mailed to the customer are stopped.
- . Deferred Payment Plan A payment plan designed to allow a customer to pay his past due amounts in monthly installments.

SCE&G Customer Representatives and Field Service Representatives are trained to identify customers with medical and/or special needs, and help them understand the types of financial assistance programs that may be available to them. Among those programs:

- White Cross Provides a courtesy service for customers who require medical equipment in their homes. A courtesy call is made prior to disconnecting special needs customers. SCE&G has approximately 4,900 White Cross customers. When these customers are delinquent, SCE&G customer service representatives place courtesy phone calls to remind them that they are late in paying their bill.
- Weatherization Some customers need help making their homes more weather resistant.
   Through employee volunteer efforts and corporate donations, SCE&G supports programs sponsored by local energy offices throughout the state to help many such customers. This program helps customers control their energy bills by weatherizing their homes so they can be heated and cooled more efficiently. Since the program began in 1983, more than 5,800 homes have been weatherized throughout South Carolina.
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program South Carolina's Low-Income Home Energy
  Assistance Program helps people with their heating bills. The amount of assistance provided
  depends on the heating fuel used and the applicant's income. Since the program began in 1980,
  more than \$72 million in assistance has gone to SCE&G customers. To be eligible, families must
  meet federal standards of a low-income household.

- The SCE&G Employee Good Neighbor Fund funded through the generous donations of SCE&G employees and retirees, this program provides temporary aid to individuals and families who are experiencing extreme financial difficulties and have exhausted all other sources of help. Funds are administered exclusively through employee referrals to provide essentials such as food, medical, and shelter expenses. In 2009, more than 340 families received financial assistance though this program.
- Project Share SCE&G collects money via bill inserts, bill message, etc. to assist customers.
   These funds are administered by state agencies and the Salvation Army. Since 1986 more than \$7M in contributions assisted 43,000 customers. In 2009 more than \$252,000.00 in contributions assisted 619 customers.

SCE&G customer service representatives regularly refer customers in need of assistance to local community action agencies, as well as state and private agencies that specialize in providing that assistance. SCE&G's Website, <a href="www.sceg.com">www.sceg.com</a>, publicizes a summary of available assistance.